



The City of Seattle

## International Special Review District

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649  
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ISRD 21/08

### MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, January 22, 2008

Time: 4:30 p.m.  
Place: Bush Asia Center  
409 Maynard Avenue S.  
Basement conference room

#### Board Members Present

Jerry Chihara  
Misun Chung Gerrick  
Robert Ha  
Amalia Gonzalez-Kahn  
Hoa Tang

#### Staff

Rebecca Frestedt

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn called the meeting to order at 4:41 p.m.

#### **012208.1 APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Ms. Frestedt said that the review of meeting minutes from January 8, 2008 has been deferred to an upcoming meeting.

#### **012208.2 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL**

012208.21 Savvy Cosmetics  
600 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. S. #105

**Signage:** Proposed replacement of an internally-lit cabinet box sign.

**Staff report:** Ms. Frestedt said that the applicant proposes to replace the face an interior-lit cabinet sign on the east façade of Uwajimaya building. The dimensions of the proposed sign are 2'6" h x 12'6" w. The aluminum cabinet will be painted black.

Ms. Frestedt passed out material samples and packet for the subject item. She said the shop has no street frontage (it is located inside Uwajimaya). She stated that this not a new business, just a name change. She introduced the applicant representative Dave Desrochers, from Signs of Seattle.

Mr. Desrochers confirmed that they plan to replace the existing sign.

**Administered by The Historic Preservation Program  
The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

Ms Chung asked if the existing sign was backlit; Mr. Desrochers said that it was.

Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn asked for clarification about the proposed color. Mr. Desrochers said that the sign will feature a darker grey band and a lighter grey with white backing; the logo will be red. Ms. Frestedt passed around a white backing sample.

Ms. Chung Gerrick's asked if there was any opportunity for the inclusion of Asian characters. Mr. Desrochers said it would be up to the owner, but that there is no reason why that couldn't be done. The content proposed is what was provided to him by the owner. Mr. Desrochers said that they have the Chinese font if the owner chose to add Asian characters at a later date.

Mr. Chihara seconded Ms. Chung Gerrick's suggestion about Asian characters. Ms. Frestedt noted that the location of the business is outside the Asian Character Design District and that there is no requirement to include Asian characters.

**Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

There was no additional Board discussion.

**Action:**

I move that the International Special Review District Board approve a Certificate of Approval for a Signage, per the applicant's submittal.

This action is based on the following: The application meets the following sections of the **SMC Chapter 23.66** and **ISRD Design Guidelines**:

**SMC 23.66.030 – Certificates of Approval**  
**SMC 23.66.338 – Business identification signs**

**ISRD Design Guidelines for Signs**  
II. Design Guidelines  
A. Buildings with Multiple Tenants  
C. Internally lighted Signs in All Location

**MM/SC/JC/RH      5:0:0    Motion carried.**

**012208.3      BOARD BUSINESS**

**Compliance and enforcement**

Ms. Frestedt noted that Dr. Austen Chan raised the issue of non-compliance and enforcement at one of the last meetings during his tenure on the Board. Dr. Chan suggested that the Board have a discussion about compliance and enforcement as a precursor to Board discussions about revising the District's design guidelines. Ms. Frestedt took this as an opportunity to request input from the Board about enforcement priorities.

Mr. Chihara suggested that the Board start with a discussion about the enforcement process. Ms. Frestedt stated that enforcement can be a labor and time intensive process, but is important in ensuring that the District rules and guidelines are applied consistently throughout the District. Mr. Chihara asked if the process it outlined explicitly within the guidelines or ordinance. Ms.

Frestedt indicated that the enforcement process is addressed in the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC 23.66.040).

Ms. Frestedt described the standard operating procedures for enforcement. First, staff becomes aware of a violation, through first hand observation or notification from a community or Board member. Staff makes contact with the business or property owner to discuss the violation and the process for coming into compliance. This may involve an in-person visit, phone call or letter. If the first contact is made in person or by phone, staff will send a follow up letter which includes an introduction to the historic district and information about the Design Guidelines and process for applying for a Certificate of Approval. The letter will typically also include a compliance deadline.

If the business or property owner does not comply within the stated deadline (which may vary depending on the nature of the violation), then the case may be referred to either the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) or Department of Transportation (SDOT) for further enforcement, including financial penalties.

Ms. Frestedt stated that she attempts to work with the individual business or property owner to help bring them in to compliance to negate the need for further enforcement or penalties. She stated that she would prefer owners see the Historic Preservation Program as an asset rather than a regulatory body, but that in reality the department plays both roles.

Mr. Chihara suggested including a reference to the enforcement process within the revised design guidelines so that individuals would have a “heads up” on what is expected and the consequences of non-compliance. Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn added that our current handout looks more like a brochure about the neighborhood than an instructive guide. Ms. Frestedt said that she will review the brochure and informational materials to see where changes or improvements are needed.

Mr. Chihara suggested that the materials be as transparent as possible and be direct, clear and open in the way that the program communicates and processes information to the community.

Ms. Frestedt asked for public comment.

Community member Paul Lee suggested that information is translated to help communicate with non-English speakers. He also suggested that there is a stronger physical presence within the District. Ms. Frestedt reminded the Board and audience members that she holds office hours at the Downtown Neighborhood Service Center on the second and fourth Tuesdays, from 2-4 PM, before the ISRD Board meetings.

Mr. Chihara suggested the greater publicity about Ms. Frestedt’s office hours is needed. He suggested publicizing the information in neighborhood newspapers. Ms. Frestedt said that she is also working with the Chinatown International District Business Improvement Area staff to communicate information to the community.

Ms. Chung Gerrick added that the Board could extend a more active role by reaching out and answering questions. She commented on the dual roles of the Board and staff as preservationists and enforcers. Ms. Frestedt encouraged Board members to share their knowledge as they talk with others within the community. She added that she will continue to consider ways to increase awareness of the work of the Board and help to educate the community about the District.

### **Discussion of revised guidelines and ISRD boundaries**

Ms. Frestedt reported that she had a conversation with Susan McLain, a planner from DPD, regarding an upcoming briefing on the status of the Livable South Downtown. Ms. Frestedt indicated that the proposed rezone offers an opportunity to revisit the boundaries of the International Special Review District. She asked the Board to consider whether or not the boundaries should be altered to include the area south of S. Dearborn St. to Charles St.

Mr. Chihara asked about the process for revising the boundaries. Ms. Frestedt stated that it would involve a legislative process that would require City Council approval. It would also involve public outreach to gauge the level of community support.

Considering areas for enhancement within the existing design guidelines, Mr. Chihara said that the weakest part of the guidelines relates to the area outside of the Asian Character Design District. He suggested that the Board should consider enhancing this section of the guidelines in addition to creating a section pertaining to new construction. Ms. Frestedt agreed and said that the Board will consider revisions to the existing guidelines, in addition to the creation of a set of new construction guidelines.

Ms. Chung Gerrick asked about the creation of the initial district boundaries. Alan Kurimura, spoke from the audience, and discussed the initial creation of the ISRD. He stated that the community didn't anticipate the development of the area around Union Station and south of Weller St. when the District was created.

The Board discussed the area of the District east of I-5. Mr. Chihara said that it is important to consider the significant buildings in that section of the District, including the Southern Chinese Baptist Church and the Buddhist temple near 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. S. and S. Weller St. He noted that there may be other significant buildings in the area, such as the MacPherson Leather Goods building. Ms. Frestedt agreed and stated that additional conversation is needed about how to treat this portion of the District.

Ms. Frestedt provided an overview of the research conducted by Kaitlyn Wright, an intern who worked with the Historic Preservation Program in the summer of 2007. Ms. Wright studied communities and districts that had commonalities to the ISRD, including historic districts in San Francisco, San Diego, Portland, OR, Victoria, BC., and Vancouver B.C. She developed a matrix which Ms. Frestedt will refine and share with the Board.

Ms. Wright found that several of the districts she studied included the following elements in their design guidelines: window type and pattern; roof form and pitch; height; massing, scale and setbacks; architectural features, such as ornamentation, parapets and cornices; and materials. Ms. Frestedt said that these are elements that the ISRD Board should consider when revising this District's guidelines.

Mr. Chihara suggested that the language is strengthened to call out "prohibited" elements, instead of those that are "discouraged". He stated that "discouraging" certain elements is too vague and difficult to enforce.

Ms. Chung Gerrick asked about current lighting guidelines and if neon is encouraged. Ms. Frestedt said that neon is encouraged. Mr. Ha described the historic use of neon on this District, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, citing neon signs on the Hong Kong Restaurant, Republic and Milwaukee buildings.

The Board reviewed the revised Columbia City Landmark District Guidelines. Ms. Gonzalez-Kahn said that she likes the phrasing of the Columbia City language.

Ms. Chung Gerrick said that she likes the idea of including pictures and graphics within the guidelines to provide a visual example. She believes that it is easier for the public to understand.

**Public comment:** Mr. Kurimura described the community visioning project, Vision 2030, which parallels DPD's zoning. He said that the Vision 2030 group would like to present their work at an upcoming ISRD Board meeting. Ms. Frestedt said that she would arrange that briefing. Mr. Chihara suggested that it precede the next DPD briefing.

**ADJOURN** at 6:12 PM.

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